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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Attorney General's Office, Arizona Lottery Thwart Winning Ticket Theft

(Phoenix, Ariz. – August 18, 2005) Attorney General Terry Goddard today announced the recovery of more than \$1 million in lottery winnings on behalf of an as-yet unidentified winner after a store clerk falsely claimed the winning ticket as her own.

Long-time Circle K clerk Delia Kerr, 50, and her sister Susan, 41, were arrested August 15 by Nogales Police for theft and fraud after learning the sisters allegedly opened a bank account in Tucson with a check for over \$1 million from the Arizona Lottery for a winning "Pick" ticket.

The ticket belonged to an unidentified man who presented it to Kerr at a Nogales Circle K for validation. Kerr allegedly scanned his tickets and returned them. The man complained to Circle K that Kerr had not returned one of his tickets. The Circle K manager attempted to help the man find the missing ticket, but with no results.

The winning ticket went unclaimed until July 17. After the ticket was claimed, Circle K heard rumors about a Circle K clerk illegally claiming over \$1 million in Lottery winnings. Circle K management contacted the Arizona Lottery Special Investigations Unit, which opened an investigation with the cooperation of the Nogales Police Department.

The investigation turned up evidence of the sisters' fraudulent activity and the location of the bank accounts. The investigators forwarded the information to the Attorney General's Office, which immediately seized over \$1 million from the sisters' bank accounts for forfeiture on behalf of the victim.

Lottery officials remind Arizona players to sign their tickets immediately after purchase to ensure no one else claims the ticket. Lottery tickets are a bearer instrument, which means that whoever is holding the ticket can cash it in.

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